

Component Parts of Phraseological and Parameological Units With Ornytonym Component in the English, Russian and Tatar Languages

Kadria A. Sakhibullina*

Kazan Federal University, Institute of International Relations, History and Oriental Studies, Kazan, Russian Federation, Russia

Yelena A. Andreyeva

Kazan Federal University, Institute of International Relations, History and Oriental Studies, Kazan, Russian Federation, Russia

Elmira I. Nazmieva

Kazan Federal University, Institute of International Relations, History and Oriental Studies, Kazan, Russian Federation, Russia

Abstract

Phraseological and parameological units being specific units of the language contain cultural information about the history, traditions and everyday life of the people speaking the language. Very often this information is encoded with the help of words used in symbolic meaning. One can observe utilizing zoomorphic and floristic components in this meaning in most of the languages. This paper studies phraseological and parameological units in the English, Tatar and Russian languages including an ornytonym (name of a bird) component. The most regular ones used in these three languages are: in English duck, cock, crow, goose, turkey, swallow, lark, hen etc. The results of the research witness that in the above-mentioned languages ornytonyms are mostly used in the symbolic meanings formed already in Ancient Egypt. We also observe names of different birds to acquire new symbolic meanings, which usually can be related to the following factors: 1) the role of the bird (usually domestic ones) in the life of the people speaking the language; 2) behaviour and characteristics of the bird being associated with some positive or negative human traits highly appreciated or condemned in the society.

Keywords: Phraseological units; Meaning; Ornithonym components; Connotational.



CC BY: [Creative Commons Attribution License 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)

1. Introduction

It is well-known that phraseological meaning is much more complicated than lexical meaning. Firstly, it is because phraseological nomination being secondary nomination does not only name the object, property or process, but also express the speaker's attitude towards them; secondly, because phraseological meaning is abstracted from the semantic meaning of the component parts. In this paper we represent comparative study of phraseological and paremiological units (PPU) with ornythonym component in the English, Russian and Tatar languages. The research is geared towards distinguishing common features and specificities of the linguistic units under analysis in these three languages. The attempt is made to identify the reason of endowing this or that ornythonym component with ameliorative or pejorative evaluation in the aforementioned languages. Within the framework of this research alongside with the methods of componential and structural-grammatical analyses, the method of semiotic analysis is utilized, i.e. the attempt is made to look for the cultural and psychological patterns that underlie the PPUs with ornythonym component.

Ornythonym components within PPUs are usually used in symbolic meaning. Merriam-webster on-line dictionary defines the term symbol in the following way: something that stands for or suggests something else by reason of relationship, association, convention, or accidental resemblance; especially: a visible sign of something invisible. The definition proves that associations and similarity are seen as the basis for some symbol to exist. Words – nominations of birds are utilized in symbolic meaning quite frequently; mainly it is connected with the ability of birds to fly, to be closer to the heavens, as people believed in the ancient times. Empiric material of the research evidences component parts of PPUs usually are nominations of either domestic birds or birds inhabiting the area close to human lodgings as: duck, cock, crow, goose, turkey, chicken, swallow, lark, hen in English. People could observe them and accumulate knowledge about their behavior, preferences, so the PPUs analyzed here appeared as the result of all this. As the methodological basis of our research many works of Russian and foreign linguists concerning the problems of phraseology were used. Among them are the works by (Ayupova, 2013; Soboleva, 2016).

2. Methodology

Phraseology and Paremiology could witness different approaches into their study. Semantic and semiotic approaches focus on the phraseological meaning structure bounding it with the etymology of phraseological images. Being a system of metatags of folklore paremiology draws special attention of adherents of this approach (A. Kunin, V. Mokienko, N. Amosova, E. Arsenteva, J. Starssler, A. Dundes, W. Mieder.). Detecting the world image reflected in Phraseology and Paremiology being traditional or up to date is the main goal of Conceptual (thematic)

*Corresponding Author

approach to its study. Some modern studies demonstrate application of mathematical model and corpus linguistics within this approach. Structural and comparative methods are very often combined with some of the aforementioned ones. In this work we analyze the symbolic signs connected with this or that bird created by each linguistic culture, on the one hand; designate the importance of each bird in the cultures of peoples speaking the languages we deal with, on the other. Accordingly, the main methods used here are lingua-cultural and semiotic ones combined with comparative method and method of componential analysis. The statistical method was also used to make some accounts to distinguish the frequency of use of phraseological and paremiological units or to raise the percentage of statuses of the component of phraseological and paremiological units.

3. Results

It can be clearly observed in PPU with ornithonym component, some names of birds can be positive or negative in the English and Russian languages. The same ornithonym may have positive evaluation in one language and negative evaluation in the other one, or one ornithonym can be positive and negative in one and the same language. 1573 phraseological and paremiological units with the ornithonym component were analyzed. Most frequently used ornithonym in the English language is duck, in spite of the fact that duck is the symbol of honesty, simplicity and sensitivity these qualities have not reflected in the phraseology and paremiology. Thus all of the PPUs with the component duck endowed with the negative evaluative meaning. The same is true for the Tatar and Russian languages. The ornithonym cock is one of the most interesting ornithonyms from the cultural point of view. In the English language this bird has only positive evaluation. In the Tatar language we may observe that this ornithonym may have negative, positive and ambivalent meanings. Thus 52% of phraseological and paremiological units with this component have negative evaluation, 24% have positive evaluation and 24 % have ambivalent meaning. In the Russian language 74 % of expressions are endowed with the negative evaluation, the rest 26 % have ambivalent meaning. He may be a symbol of reproduction, mothering, but this quality is reflected only in one English phraseological unit and it has positive evaluative meaning. But the rest phraseological and paremiological units in the English and Russian languages are endowed with negative evaluation. The ornithonym hen within 88% of the Tatar phraseological and paremiological units may have negative evaluation, the rest 12% have neutral or ambivalent meaning (Teliya, 1986).

What concerns the ornithonym goose, it also has more negative meanings than positive. 2% of phraseological and paremiological units in the English language with this component and 6 % in the Russian language have ambivalent meaning, 98 % in English, 94% in Russian - negative meaning. The situation is different in the Tatar language, where only 50% of phraseological and paremiological units with the component goose are endowed with negative evaluation, 27% have positive evaluative meaning and 23 % have ambivalent meaning. The ornithonym turkey is depicted in the phraseology of the Russian language as aggressive bird, thus within the phraseological and paremiological units it have negative evaluative meaning. For Tatar people, turkey is not only the symbol of aggression, but also a symbol of wealth, that is why only 87% of phraseological and paremiological units have negative meaning, 13 % have positive evaluative meaning. In the English language turkey have negative evaluation, but only one unit with this ornithonym is ameliorated in the process of development of language. The similarities and differences in evaluation are connected with the norms of perception of this or that phenomenon by people speaking the language. Particular aesthetic standards and ethic ideas about this or that qualities fixed in the conscious of a language speaker. Their divergence from norms causes pejorative evaluation (Spears, 2002).

4. Discussion

It is obvious that there were more domestic birds names used in PPU. It is concerned with the lifestyles of both cultures. That is why people could observe their behavior, collect knowledge about them and characterize them. In this research we studied the symbolic meaning which is specific for this or that ornithonym. There is no exact definition for any symbol; each symbol is open to interpretation and birds are no exception to this. Their symbolism can vary greatly depending on different cultures and religion. Ornithonym DUCK. The Duck is generally thought to be a symbol of resourcefulness. The duck has the ability to walk, swim, fly and duck under the water to feed or hide from predators. In both Chinese and Japanese culture, the duck is a symbol of happiness and fidelity. The duck is a symbol which joins the sea and the sky according to Native American mythology. In ancient Egypt in early 1500's ducks were the subjects of visual art. Most of the picture plots, as well as in oriental arts, have a kind of erotic meaning of duck images. In ancient Greek art, the god of love Eros was represented with a duck (Moon, 1998).

In a Celtic culture the duck is a symbol of honesty, simplicity. Ducks also represent sensitivity, as they tend to be very sensitive to their surroundings. Also viewed as graceful and agile - particularly in the water, ducks are respected for their beauty and adaptation to nature. But at the same time, ducks are used to portray the silly behavior. What concerns the English, Russian and Tatar PPUs, they point out some characteristic features of the appearance or behavior of this bird. More than that, they mostly are endowed with pejorative evaluation. There are several PPUs in Russian and in some dialects of Tatar in which the duck is represented as a gluttonous living being. There are such phraseological units as lit.: the duck is fool and gluttonous, eats like the duck. Tatar phraseology emphasizes one more property of this bird – garrulity, e.g.: lit.: the duck who cannot keep secrets; the one who ate the tongue of a duck. Both the phraseological units are used when speaking about a talkative person. In English phraseology the component duck is also used with pejorative evaluation, e.g.: a sitting duck, play duck and drakes with something (Iana et al., 2017; Kassimbekova et al., 2018).

GOOSE. This ornithonym symbolizes fertility, fidelity, female principle, also bravery, loyalty, teamwork, confidence, protection, communication and determination. Geese are incredibly gifted navigators and instinctively know the way to warmer climates. They forge ahead with confidence and bravery. Further, geese have intricate methods of communication - not only do they sense when their brethren are in trouble, they also work as a team to communicate warnings. Geese are also fiercely protective of their young - often presenting an impressive thrashing display to would-be predators. These scare tactics often work to protect goslings from attack. Goose symbolizes ordering feminine home space, which is observed in the following phraseological units of the Tatar language: tat. lit.: even twelve goslings are few for a couple of geese, a good goose will not litter his/her nest; as geese brooding upon their eggs (Cowie, 1998).

This animal also symbolizes indiscretion which is connected with St. Martin's legend. He put his foot down to be vowed to monkery and hid in the goose cot. A scarey geese cackle spit him out. In ancient Egypt goose was a symbol of sun, it is God's agent and mediator of Heaven and Earth. In ancient Rome goose was related to the God of war and after well known event, were geese saved the Rome it became a symbol of vigilance. In some PPU's of the Russian and English languages the image of this bird is used to express stupidity, e.g.: eng. as stupid as a goose, wild goose chase, to shoe a goose; rus. lit.: goose is not a playmate for a pig; one goose cannot change anything. But the proverb Goose not a playmate for pig gives us controversial conception of goose. This proverb is used towards the people who are absolutely different by their social status, world view, and here the cleanness and behavior of goose and pig are compared. In this case goose conversely is represented as majestic and honorable bird (Ammer, 1997).

HEN epitomizes reproduction, mothering. PPU's of the English, Russian and Tatar languages with this component are used to describe human character and behavior, mostly the negative ones. In a west folk there were the images of White and Black hen, where Black hen was the symbol of evil and White hen was the symbol of happiness. This symbol was reflected in phraseology: Son of the white hen (very happy person). As hen covers the eggs, it represents such qualities as assiduity and patience. There is an image of stupid hen in the European consciousness. He starts to panic without a reason, and such behavior is compared with the incoherent thoughts of obtuse person. PPU's with this component in the English and Tatar languages are used to describe man's character and behavior, in most cases they have pejorative evaluative meaning. For example, we can observe it in the following proverbs: eng. A hen party; rus. lit.: every hen is brave in its own territory. Alongside with other words denoting domestic animals and birds hen symbolizes a person of petty interests, average person, e.g.: tat. lit.: there does not exist a hen with 4 legs. In European world image a hen is depicted as a fool creature, e.g.: rus. lit.: all is wheat for the blind hen; tat. lit.: an infertile hen makes much noise (Alifirenko, 2009; Asakere et al., 2018).

COCK. Since antiquity the cock has been, and still is, a sacred animal in some cultures. In ancient Egypt and in most of other traditions the basis of mythological image of this bird was its connection with the sun. As the sun, cock counts the time and announce about the beginning of the day. Most cultures embrace the cock as a solar symbol and a sign of illumination, with the exception of the Nordic and Celtic cultures. They describe the rooster as a creature of the Underworld. Specifically, the cock served as a messenger of the Underworld, screeching out warnings in danger, and calling out for the souls of the fallen in battle. The ancient Greeks believed the cock rose to attention and greeted the sun every morning with a hearty cry, symbolizing victory over night. As such, the cock was considered a solar emblem to the Greeks, and was adopted as a sacred sign to the god Apollo as well as Zeus. There are different meanings of the ornithonym cock realized in PPU's of the English and the Russian languages. In the Russian and Tatar phraseology the cock is depicted as a pugnacious and boastful creature – the properties that are condemned in these linguistic cultures. So the PPU's with this component usually have negative evaluative seme of connotative meaning in these two languages, e.g.: rus. lit.: a pugnacious cock will not die his own death, spread oneself wide as a cock; tat. lit.: a cock is the king of his own heap of rubbish, the cock that crows before the time comes is cut and eaten. What concerns the English PPU's, component cock realizes positive evaluative meaning in them, because English people treat this bird as a brave one. It may be connected with the egocentricity of an English-speaking personality, who appreciates showing one's abilities. For example: eng. cock of the walk, live like a fighting cock. It may be related to the egocentric character of the English-speaking personality, for whom it is important to be able to show his/her advantages. The meaning of the latter is to live very well. Albeit Russian and Tatar speakers are sure that modesty is one of the best qualities of a person (Andreyeva et al., 2015; Antúnez, 2015).

Turkey symbolizes aggression, rage when they occur without any reason, e.g.: blew like a turkey; In some cultures this bird is used in the symbolic meaning of foolishness, arrogance and pomposity – the properties absolutely condemned in any linguistic society, e.g.: rus. do not expect anything good from the turkey who thinks he / she is an eagle. In Tatar phraseology the component turkey can also be used with ameliorative evaluative component of meaning, denoting richness prosperity, e.g.: tat. lit.: a turkey of the neighboring village is like a duck of our village, a hen of a neighbor seems as big as a turkey. This symbolic meaning of the component turkey may be related to the fact that turkey meat was expensive, because this bird was not widely bred in Russia. Families which could afford it were considered to be well-off. In English phraseology there is a PU to talk turkey, which in the dictionary of American Idioms: The English of the New World (published in 1872) is defined as talk in a silly, foolish way American Slang and Colloquial Expressions (published in 2000) this PU has the following definition: to talk serious business, to talk frankly. This change in the meaning of the PU exemplifies the possibility of evaluative seme alteration in the course of language development. Shifts of this type may occur due to changes in the society, when the attitude towards some object, phenomenon and process may change (Isanbet, 1959; 1989).

5. Conclusion

Negative or positive evaluation may differ due to the different factors. One part of phraseological and paremiological units appeared on a basis of appearance of birds. This kind of units is used to evaluate the appearance of a person. The results of our research show that in most cases such phraseological and paremiological units used to give negative evaluation. The other part of phraseological and paremiological units connected with the behavior of a bird. Birds always attracted people, and their behavior was always the object of attention. When some peculiarities of birds' behavior were approved (such as flying, singing or looking after their offspring), the others were disapproved. Thus phraseological and paremiological units with the positive and negative evaluation of people's behavior appeared in the languages under study. It is possible to say, that approximately 70% of such phraseological and paremiological units have pejorative evaluation and 30% have positive evaluation.

Besides the appearance and behavior of birds reflected on the culture and phraseological and paremiological units, it is necessary to mention the role of birds in every-day life of people is also reflected in phraseology and paremiology. People raised domestic birds, hunted the wild birds and they were the important part of their food. For example, for people of North America turkey was a symbol of Thanksgiving, while for Tatar people it was rare bird and was an indication of wealth. In all the three language under study ornithonyms used to specify invisible and intangible qualities of a person: greed, aggression, meekness and stupidity. Among them the ornithonyms describing the appearance of a person: beauty or deformity. Domestic birds became the laugh stock in all the languages. They are endowed with such qualities as stupidity, unwieldiness. But wild birds are always respected. It may be interpreted as the birds of prey are birds that are able to compete with person as they were not tamed by people.

6. Acknowledgements

The work is performed according to the Russian Government Program of Competitive Growth of Kazan Federal University.

References

- Alifirenko, N. F. (2009). *Phraseology and paremiology*. Nauka: Moscow.
- Ammer, C. (1997). *The American heritage dictionary of idioms*. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company.: Boston.
- Andreyeva, Y., Mazitova, F. and Smirnova, M. (2015). Common and specific images of the Russian and German axiological phraseological units in the cultural codes. *Journal of Language and Literature*, 6(4): 380-84.
- Antúnez, J. V. (2015). Tecnociencia, derecho y sociedad. Pilares de una modernidad inacabada. *Opción*, 31(76).
- Asakere, A., Sayah, R., Hassanzadeh, S. A. and Atashene, M. (2018). The ruler's powers in executing punishment in the view of jurisprudence and criminal provisions of iran. *Astra Salvensis*.
- Ayupova, R. A. (2013). *Phraseology and phraseography of English and Russian languages*. Kazanskiy universitet: Kazan.
- Cowie, A. P. (1998). *Phraseology, Theory, Analysis and applications*. Clarendon press: Oxford.
- Iana, B., Elena, A. and Roza, A. (2017). The Turkish online journal of design, art and communication Tojdac April 2017 special edition. Motivated meaning of phraseological units with colorative components in English and Turkish. 7(9/1):
- Isanbet, N. (1959). *Tatar halyk mekallere, 1st tom*. Tat. Kit. Nashr: Kazan.
- Isanbet, N. (1989). *Tatar telelen idiom suzlege*. Tat. Whale. Nashr. : Kazan. 2.
- Kassimbekova, B., Tulekova, G. and Korvyakov, V. (2018). Problems of development of aesthetic culture at teenagers by means of the Kazakh decorative and applied arts. *Opción*, 34(85).
- Moon, R. (1998). *Fixed expressions and idioms in english, Corpus based approach (oxford studies in lexicography and lexicology)*. Oxford university press: Oxford.
- Soboleva, N. P. (2016). Translation of phraseological units used in film taglines, Linguoculturological aspect. *Journal of Language and Literature*, 7(2): 348-52.
- Spears, R. (2002). *Dictionary of american slang and colloquial expressions* 3rd edn McGraw-Hill, National Textbook Company.
- Teliya, V. N. (1986). *The connotative aspect of nominative semantics*. Nauka: Moscow.